October 21, 2005

TechNews is a guide to share information regarding deadlines, events and software version release dates. The intended audiences are PCHA and FPA-PM application users. New FPA updates, changes and work arounds to PCHA and FPA-PM are listed below. Web site links relative to the software updates are also highlighted.

Visit the FPA home page (http://www.fpa.nifc.gov/) for the redesigned and reorganized User Guide for FPA-PM.

Release of Version 1.3.2 of the FPA-PM software is available. This is the version to be used for the February 15 budget submission. The program code is frozen and only "showstopper" fixes will be implemented until after February 15. There are a number of enhancements and "bug" fixes in this version. The primary changes are:

Import FMU Weights Data – capability allows the user to enter data in an Excel spreadsheet and import that data directly to the desired FMU weight table.
> **Suggestion**: The Pre-Analysis report is generated and the FMU Weights tab from that report is copied into a new Excel workbook. This process must be used to establish the correct format to prepare import sheets. This will provide the Sensitivity Period designator and date range, and labels the Fire Intensity Levels. The import format is 26 columns by 6 rows.
> Also see Draft User Guide page 71.
>
> The process is easy to use.
> 1. Copy the data (no column or row headings) and open the FMU weight table that you are importing to.
> 2. Click on the Insert IA Weights button and the import completes.
> Follow the same steps to import WFU weights for each FMU that has WFU.

Allow Multiple Working Planning Data Sets – this change allows multiple working data sets. **CAUTION:** Be sure that all FPU editors know which sets are for what purpose. While this is a powerful tool for "what if" analysis testing in an FPU, it can also be a disaster if a wrong dataset gets deleted or modified to the point of requiring new inputs. **There is no system protection if a dataset is deleted!**
> **Suggestion:** Establish a written protocol so editors and the FPU Team Administrator know what is being worked on, by whom and for what purpose.
> Also see Draft User Guide pages 10, 11, 16, 115.

Copy Leadership and Support between Planning Data Sets (PDS) – **Please Note**: Copying anything from one PDS to another will overwrite existing information. It also important for the user to check to be sure that information copied matches the analysis in the dataset. See also Draft User Guide page 124.

Allows Update of FTE in Manage Budget – Instead of removing a position completely to make edits, you can edit the position data and copy a position. See also Draft User Guide pages 120-124.

Allow Multiple Curves Submitted – this modification has been made so that both a Budget Request curve and a wider range curve can be submitted. The budget request is the run that will be at the +/- 5% funding level. The other submission button is the run for the wide range "interesting curve" (+/-50% funding level). **Important** – once a budget request has been validated and submitted that action can only be undone by contacting the FPA office in Boise who in turn contacts IBM to "unsubmit" the analysis. See also Draft User Guide pages 126-128.

Remove "*Other Program Support*" Quick Fix – items formerly considered under "*Other Program Support*" are now covered under the Budget Development and Delivery (BDD) application which will be released around November 15. Complete instructions on entering "*Other Program Support*" will be included in the BDD User's Guide.

A number of other Critical and Major Defect fixes have been incorporated, but most are not visible to the user. Those include:

Lookup Dataset v1.3.2 – This is the latest lookup dataset and **must** be used for the analysis due by February 15, 2006. **Please Note:** It is critical to update any working datasets to use this lookup data as analysis results may be significantly different if an older set is used. See also Draft User Guide pages 115.

For additional information: Look at the Release Notes for this release on the Help Tab in FPA-PM.

Optional: PCHA Release 1.2.31, Patch C is the latest version of PCHA and **may** be used for the analysis due by February 15.

- This version will create a series of 100 fire event scenarios which are statistically ranked. The median scenario (midpoint) is used to build the XML file to be imported to FPA-PM. This process may take some time to process (up to an hour), depending on the number of fires in the database for the latest ten years.
- Weather data is also truncated to match the preparedness season as determined from the fire occurrence records.
- The user should follow the steps under the FPA tab to update the PM record numbers (see steps in TechNews July 1, 2005).
- Recreate the FMU weather dataset, recalculate the ERC and wind speed bins and regenerate the XML file.

Please Note: For FPA-PM Version 1.3.2 you must use PCHA Version 1.2.31, patch A **or** PCHA Version 1.2.31, patch C. Other versions will give you an error on importing the XML file to FPA-PM.